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**Morven Park Celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Opening to the Public**

LEESBURG, VA –The Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation Board of Trustees is proud to announce that Tuesday, October 17, 2017 marks 50 years since historic Morven Park first opened its gates to the public.

Morven Park's last private owner, Marguerite Davis, created the Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation to operate Morven Park for the benefit of the public in 1955. Marguerite and her husband Westmoreland Davis, moved to Morven Park in 1903. The iconic mansion was constructed in phases during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by three generations of the Swann family. In 1901, the Scott family fully updated the mansion and outbuildings so when the Davises purchased Morven Park the house and grounds were in pristine condition. Westmoreland Davis worked to improve the lives of Virginia's rural citizens; work which led to his election to Governor in 1918. Following her husband's death, Marguerite relocated to another family property, taking only her personal possessions and leaving all her furniture, art and antiques in the Morven Park mansion. Following her death in 1964, the Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation spent over two years preparing the property for the public and then officially opened the gates on October 17, 1967.

Since opening in 1967, Morven Park has come to play a central role in the Loudoun community offering exceptional educational programs, a variety of equestrian events, pristine athletic fields, tours of the iconic Davis mansion and Winmill Carriage museum, nature trails, tranquil boxwood gardens, and more recently has become a popular wedding and events venue.

The Davis' love of horses and all things equestrian, their support of local youth sports, and their dedication to preservation and education has guided Morven Park's programs since 1967. Today, the staff and trustees of the Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation are proud of all that Morven Park can offer to the public on the 1,000-acre historic estate.

For more information on Morven Park's educational offerings, athletic and equestrian events, museum tours, special events and hiking trails, visit [www.MorvenPark.org](http://www.MorvenPark.org).

Morven Park is a 1,000-acre historic estate and horse park in Leesburg, Virginia. Known as the "Central Park" of Loudoun County, Morven Park welcomes 250,000 visitors each year who come to enjoy exquisite scenery, formal boxwood gardens, the Morven Park International Equestrian Center, the athletic fields, the iconic Greek Revival mansion, museums and hiking trails. Morven Park was once the home of Thomas Swann, Jr., governor of Maryland during the Civil War, as well as the home of Westmoreland Davis, governor of Virginia during WWI.

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